

BASIC CHESS STRATEGY

There is a reason chess is called a game of war. In some countries like Sweden and Australia, it is widely used to train the minds of officers and soldiers. This popular board game is also used in the military to improve the understanding of real-life combats. More importantly, chess is used to teach strategy, an important element in winning battles.

Whether it's a real war or a chess match you're facing, you need a strategy to win. Without one, your chances of beating your opponent are slim. You should know that a well thought-out plan or strategy is what makes grandmasters like Garry Kasparov and Vladimir Kramnik World Champions.

But you don't have to be a grandmaster to have a chess strategy. There are already basic chess strategies that you can apply to your own game. Below are some of the most popular ones:

PROPER KING PLACEMENT

Since your opponent's goal is to checkmate your king, one of the most straightforward strategies in chess is to make sure that your king is well-protected. There are two ways to protect your king: surround it with other chess pieces or place it in a very secure place on the board. Of the two, the latter is the more practical option. More often than not, the two corners of your side of the board are the safest places for your king. This is where castling comes in handy. It doesn't matter whether it's kingside or queenside castling; the important thing is that you castle as soon as you can.

VALUE YOUR CHESS PIECES

Even though there are so called high-value and low-value chess pieces, there is no such thing as an unimportant chess piece. Keep in mind that even a lowly pawn can be a key to winning a match if you know how to use it. With that said, you should value each of your chess pieces. Actually, there's a simple system often used by chess wizards to know the value of their chess pieces. Here it is:

- * A pawn's value is 1.
- * A bishop's value is 3.
- * A knight's value is 3.
- * A rook's value is 5.
- * A queen's value is 9.
- * A king's value is infinite.

This means that at the start of every game, you get a total value of 39. This is your strength, which declines as every piece is taken away throughout the game. However, chess values mean little as the game proceeds. Keep in mind that at the end of the game, it's not the player with the most chess value who wins. A chess value

system was developed only to serve as your guide in making important game decisions.

TAKE OVER THE CENTER

If the corners of the board are the safest places, the center is the strongest. If you want to take control of the game, take over the center squares with your high-value pieces. Once you're occupied this part of the board, your opponent will have a hard time finding good spots for his chess pieces. Another reason you should take over the center squares is for your chess pieces to have more room for movement.

MOVE EVERY PIECE

Since each chess piece has its own role in the board, it's only right that you move all of them. Don't "under-utilize" your chess pieces. Bear in mind that all your chess pieces work as a single team with one purpose. With that said, using all your chess pieces is a smart strategy. After all, there's no way you can checkmate your opponent's king with a lone chess piece, can you?